

REMARKS

The Office Action of April 25, 2006 was received and carefully reviewed. The Examiner is thanked for reviewing this application and for indicating claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, 17 and 19 as containing allowable subject matter.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the currently pending rejections are requested for the reasons advanced in detail below.

Claims 1, 5-17, 19 and 20 were pending prior to the instant amendment. By this amendment, claim 1 has been amended, and claims 19-20 have been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1, 5-17 are pending, of which claim 1 is independent.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 8-12, 15 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ling et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0132077 – hereafter Ling) in view of Takabayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. NO. 5,262,227 – hereafter Takabayashi). Further, claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, 17 and 19 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the interest of expediting the allowance of this application, without acquiescing to the pending rejection, Applicants have amended claim 1, as shown above, to include all of the limitations of allowable dependent claim 19. Consequently, Applicants have canceled dependent claim 19. Further, Applicants have canceled independent claim 20 without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter disclosed therein. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to the subject matter disclosed in the cancel claim.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the rejection and objection of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1 and 5-17 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue. If a conference would expedite prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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